

Dispute Between Washington Columnist and Press

By MARTIN ARNOLD

Each month from a small office on 14th Street in Northwest Washington, an organization called Accuracy in Media, Inc., sends out a newsletter. It is dedicated, the organization says, to monitoring the press, television and radio for accuracy and fairness.

Lately, the lion's share of its work has gone into monitoring Jack Anderson, the Washington-based columnist, and Mr. Anderson has struck back, accusing the group's chairman, Reed J. Irvine, a Federal Reserve Board economist, of using his federal office to do its AIM work.

The accusation caused such a dispute that Representative Wright Patman, Democrat of Texas, asked the Federal Reserve Board to investigate Mr. Anderson's charges, and scheduled for today a hearing of his House Banking Subcommittee on Domestic Monetary Policy to do the same thing.

Mr. Irvine, Mr. Anderson and Les Whitten, an Anderson associate, are scheduled to testify at the hearing.

Other AIM Targets

AIM has other targets. Once, for instance, it criticized The Wall Street Journal, Mr. Irvine said, and another time it got a correction from The National Review, the magazine of conservative opinion. But mostly its targets have been The New York Times, The Washington Post and the television networks, particularly the Columbia Broadcasting System and the National Broadcasting Company.

These are considered by AIM to be the liberal media, and Mr. Irvine says it is natural that the organization criticizes The Times so often since it is the newspaper that he usually reads.

"We haven't got the time or budget to read much more," says Mr. Irvine. "Most of the complaints we follow up come from outsiders who alert us to things in the media they consider inaccurate and unfair."

Seeks A.C.L.U. Aid

To help him defend himself and his organization before the Patman subcommittee, Mr. Irvine has asked the aid of the American Civil Liberties Union, and a spokesman said that organization is considering helping.

In his column on March 12,

Irvine did use the information for AIM business. Mr. Irvine said he had a legitimate reason to ask for the information.

One of Mr. Irvine's complaints about the Patman hearing is that Mr. Patman's administrative aide is Baron L. Shacklette, who in 1958 was an investigator for the Special House Committee on Legislative Oversight. Mr. Shacklette was forced to resign when it was discovered that he and Mr. Anderson, then an assistant to the late Drew Pearson, the columnist, had electronically bugged a hotel suite rented by Bernard Goldfine, a Boston industrialist accused of seeking and receiving favors from Sherman Adams. Mr. Adams was

the assistant to President Eisenhower.

Friend of Anderson

Mr. Irvine finds the Shacklette-Anderson-Patman connection a bit too much of a coincidence, he says, although Mr. Shacklette said that it is just that, a coincidence. He works in Mr. Patman's House office, not for the Patman subcommittee, Mr. Shacklette pointed out, and did not even know about the hearings until he read them about them in the newspaper. "My friendship with Mr. Anderson is pretty thin," Mr. Shacklette said in an interview.

Mr. Irvine describes the philosophy behind his media-watching this way.

"I am against totalitarianism," he says. "The communists are the most important dictatorship around now, and I think it's the duty of the press to point that out. I'm trying to help my country." press to point that out. I'm trying to help my country."

Mr. Irvine, of medium height, is 55 years old but looks younger. His hair is still mainly dark, and cut in the manner of the Pfiffiger.

The budget for his organization runs to about \$65,000 a year, he says, and most of the money comes in small contributions from people who agree with its purpose and who he says are generally disenchanted with the press. The contributions are tax-deductible. The newsletter, called AIM Re-

Mr. Anderson said that Mr. Irvine used his \$37,000-a-year job at the Federal Reserve to gather information from Federal agencies, information then used by AIM. Mr. Patman in a letter to Dr. Arthur F. Burns, the Federal Reserve chairman, said, "Of even greater seriousness, however, is the use of this information, obtained under false pretenses, to attempt to harass the press, and hamper their reporting of news of major public interest." The Representative asked for, and was promised, a Federal Reserve investigation. To these charges, Mr. Irvine entered a general denial, saying that all his AIM work was done at night or on the weekends at his home in Silver Spring, Md., and J. R. Van Evera, the retired Navy captain who is executive secretary of AIM, said that Mr. Irvine was "meticulous" in separating his job from his avocation.

Noteworthy Dedication

Bernard Yoh, an AIM consultant, says, in fact, that Mr. Irvine is so dedicated at night and on weekends to his AIM work that he "is the only person I know who is as dedicated as a Communist—except he takes time out to play tennis on Saturday mornings." Mr. Yoh, a citizen of Nationalist China, lectures on what he calls "human dynamics" at the Air Force University in Montgomery, Ala.

Despite Mr. Irvine's denial, it is true that Mr. Anderson's column was based on a request for information that Mr. Irvine did make on an official Federal Reserve form and that when the Government official responded to the request, Mr.

Monitor Spurs House Inquiry Into the Critic's Methods

port, sells for \$3 a year.

AIM calls itself an impartial, nonpartisan organization. Mr. Irvine says, in fact, that at one time he was "a firebrand left-winger." He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Utah in 1942 and took a graduate degree at Oxford

He is now, he says, a member of the "McDowell" luncheon group, which meets monthly here and which is named in honor of the late Arthur McDowell, a union leader, who had founded the Council Against Communist Aggression.

Contributors Secret

Journalist tend to think of AIM as a right-wing political organization, and not as a le-

gitimate press critic at all. The organization refuses to make public a list of its contributors, although Mr. Irvine will acknowledge that it has received a contribution —\$1,500, he says —from an oil company, that one businessman gave it \$15,000 through the businessman's personal foundation, and that another businessman gave the group stock worth \$20,000, stock that AIM held until its value dropped to \$13,000.

AIM works in several ways. It sends frequent letters to the news media demanding corrections and when the letters are not printed it often takes out advertisements in an offending paper. Many of its complaints have proven to be in accurate. In a recent letter to The

Times, for instance, Mr. Irvine complained that two developments be considered newsworthy were not reported in the Feb. 22, 1975, editions of the papers. But one of the developments was reported in all editions of the paper, and an article on the second appeared in all but the first edition. Both articles reported precisely the information that Mr. Irvine said was not in the paper.

AIM also buys shares in such targets as the New York Times Company and NBC, and then Mr. Irvine appears at the stockholders meetings to argue with the corporations' officers. This also gives AIM the power, on occasion, to get stockholder

therefore debated at the meetings—resolutions intended to affect the way news is presented.

Mr. Irvine says that there is "some truth" to the allegations that AIM is a political propagandist group, although he adds, "We depend to a large extent on the complaints we get from around the country."

But the facts will show, he says, that CBS, when it broadcast an interview with Fidel Castro, did not report that "Castro still supports revolutions in Latin America." CBS, denies this. "We are like Churchill in the nineteen thirties when he was warning about Hitler and everybody was saying, 'What about that nut, Churchill?'" Mr. Irvine said.